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CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL (BIOLOGICAL) WEAPONS

Letter dated 3 September 1992 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a communiqué issued by the Government of Argentina concerning the draft Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (see annex).

I request that this letter and its annex be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 60 of the provisional agenda.

(Signed) Alfredo V. CHIARADIA
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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ANNEX

Communiqué issued by the Government of Argentina concerning the draft Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

The Government of Argentina expresses its satisfaction at the completion of work, in Geneva, on the draft Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

This international treaty, which was negotiated over two decades in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, will totally prohibit an entire category of weapons of mass destruction, whose recent use in armed conflicts has clearly demonstrated their destructive power and devastating effects on people.

The draft Convention, which is a complex document of more than 200 pages, provides for a mechanism for inspection of the chemical industry which would adequately ensure faithful compliance with the treaty, while at the same time it would protect the legitimate industrial and commercial interests involved.

For the purpose of supervising and coordinating the inspection regime, an international organization for the prohibition of chemical weapons would be set up, with headquarters in The Hague.

Argentina has been closely involved in the negotiating process that has now been brought to fruition, reflecting a transparent and responsible policy of non-proliferation in the field of disarmament.

Nearly a year before the conclusion of these important negotiations, in September 1991, Argentina, together with Brazil and Chile, reaffirmed this policy in the Mendoza Declaration, which was also endorsed by Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Uruguay, thereby giving a regional character to their common belief in the importance of the chemical weapons treaty.

The signatories of the Declaration undertook to become original parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Furthermore, special mention should be made of the recent measures adopted by the Argentine Republic to further the objective of non-proliferation by restricting the export of certain sensitive chemical substances (decree 603/92, which is based on the principles and objectives of the Convention).

The recently concluded draft Convention will be referred by the Conference on Disarmament to the United Nations General Assembly.

The Argentine Republic calls upon all States to accept the draft Convention and to sign it at the earliest possible date.